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The Organ of the National Union of
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

NON-PARTY.

Societies and Branches in the Union
602.

LAW-ABIDING.

VOL. VI., No. 298.]

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1914.

[PRICE 1d.
Registered as a Newspaper]

Notes and News.

Christmas Day.

On this Christmas Day of 1914, we desire to send to our sisters in other countries, whether at war or at peace, an expression of our sympathy and our hope that some day wars may cease throughout the world, and that the awful sacrifice of life now going on may not be in vain.

Sir George Pragnell at the Queen's Hall.

Sir George Pragnell gave a most practical suggestion for workers for our troops at the Queen's Hall meeting on December 16th. He pointed out that socks wear out in the foot, and if the foot is cut off and a hole made in the other part for the thumb to go through, an excellent mitten is the result. They have, of course, to be sewn over, but such work can well be done by unemployed women, without taking work away from anyone. We heartily endorse all that the speaker said on unemployment and the way in which it might have been avoided if business heads had been set to work at once on the work of re-arrangement, and the placing of the huge contracts for army clothing. We are the more grateful for such practical hints now, even in the smallest matters, and we take this opportunity of reminding our readers that the need for warm knitted articles is perpetual. The things wear out terribly quickly, and cannot be replaced too fast. Several soldiers' wives have already expressed to us their anxiety lest the supply should run short merely from the belief that no more is at present required.

Manchester and Women Patrols.

We deeply regret the decision of the Manchester Watch Committee not to use the help of women patrols. In spite of all disadvantages, the patrols are doing admirable work in many places. We should like to see them given more authority, but at least they are "officially recognised" by the Home Office, and this gives to women of sense and experience something at least of a standing with those with whom they have to deal. We believe they will work out for themselves many of the difficult problems which arise in war conditions, and prove their work too valuable to be dispensed with when peace returns at last.

The War Office Circular.

We are glad to see that protests against the police surveillance of soldiers' wives continue to be made. As the matter now stands, the order is not being enforced in the whole metropolitan area, and in other places protests have been made by the local authorities, notably in Manchester and Birmingham. In Preston, as our readers are aware, the women took the matter into their own hands, and exacted an apology from their accusers. A considerable number of trade unions and trade councils have protested against the order, and on the authority of *The Times*, we are informed that the circular is a serious obstacle to recruiting in the North of England. We urge its withdrawal most strongly, and that withdrawal should be unqualified and immediate. It is not enough to say that it was intended kindly, and means only that soldiers' wives will be treated with greater indulgence than

other people. In the first place, such indulgence is not a kindness, but a tacit insult. In the second, it creates an actual grievance, since it means that a soldier's wife charged with drunkenness by the police, is admonished and discharged without any opportunity of establishing her innocence. That is to say, she is not technically "charged" at all. She is merely taken to the police-station, and the fact of her being admonished for drunkenness recorded against her. The character of no other citizen is thus left completely in the hands of the police, who act here as accuser, judge, and jury in one, while the defendant is not even heard.

The Control of the Children.

The most extraordinary part of the matter appears, however, not in the circular, but in the statement issued by the Press Bureau, in which it is stated that the power of the War Office to transfer the children of mothers decided (by the police?) to be "unworthy," to other homes, remains untouched. We cannot believe that the War Office possesses such authority, though it is, perhaps, to be assumed that it has authority to do anything that it chooses under the provisions of martial law. Unless, however, martial law immediately suspends all rights whatsoever, we can imagine no invasion of them more unpardonable than this assumption of power to remove children from the care of their mothers by a purely arbitrary decision, from which there appears to be no appeal.

To Whom is Payment Due?

The provision made for the dependants of soldiers is so great an advance on anything done in the past that it will be a disaster if it does not, in the end, fulfil the objects it was intended to achieve. These were: (1) to make it possible for men with families depending on them, to volunteer for foreign service without feeling that they must leave their wives and children wholly unprovided for; (2) to recognise the debt of the nation to its wives and mothers, who, in giving their husbands, are left to bear a double burden at home. Unfortunately, no one seems to have decided whether the payments made are to be regarded as part of the soldier's wage, or as a payment to the wife and mother for the work that falls on her. If it is the former, then the whole business of police surveillance becomes utterly beside the mark; the man has a right to his wages, whether his wife is "worthy" or not. If it is the latter, we have established the fact that the work of home-maker has an economic value to the State. But then, this must be true of all home-makers, and not only of soldiers' wives. And such surveillance as then becomes permissible should certainly not be in the hands of the police, nor the control of the children's domicile in those of the War Office.

N.U.W.S.S. Meetings.

We are asked to announce that the Council will meet in London on February 4th and 5th, and a public meeting will be held on February 5th. No Hyde Park meeting will be held on December 27th, but it will be held as usual on January 3rd. Owing to pressure on our very limited space this week, we have been obliged to print reports of work done by our societies on the back page of the paper.

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WOMEN'S SERVICE UNDER FIRE.

Almost every day French papers record the brave deeds of French-women, but it is not generally realised in this country what a number of women have served under fire in various capacities during the present war. In the early days of the campaign, Belgian women used to take food daily to the men in the trenches, and family parties might be seen eating their meal together within range of the enemy's guns. Many Belgian women, too, went out after dark on to the battlefield to succour the wounded.

Among many examples of women's heroism under fire, reported from Russia, is that of two peasant women who, during a battle, carried fifteen wounded soldiers to a place of safety before the arrival of the Red Cross party, and continued afterwards to help. Another is of a girl of eighteen who brought three children out of a burning house while German guns were demolishing her village.

French Army dispatches have called attention to the bravery of Mlle. Marie Pierron, who searched a wood for wounded reported to be missing, and organised and directed their transport, looking after them all night, although the enemy was close at hand. Other French-women mentioned in dispatches—to name only a few—are Mlle. Emilie Duvinge, a telegraphist who stayed on at her post for two days, after the rest of the post office staff had left, and assisted the military telegraphists under fire from an attacking party; Mlle. Marguerite Cuny and Mlle. Bertrand, who gave efficient help to the doctor in charge of the military hospital during the bombardment of a town, and some nuns of Saint Charles de Nancy, who sheltered nearly a thousand wounded in their establishment under deadly and incessant fire after the civil authorities had abandoned the town, and also kept a look-out every day for French soldiers passing through, in order that they might give them food.

Our own King has conferred the decoration of the Red Cross upon Mlle. Eugenie Antoine, for the courage which she showed in looking after English wounded at Vailly-sur-Aisne, while the village was bombarded, this being, says *La Française*, one of the first English decorations bestowed during the war.

On at least one occasion, Belgian women actually took up arms and repelled a German force. At Herstal, when all the men had left to join the army, the town was attacked, and the women swore that the National Arms factory should not fall into German hands. Armed with revolvers and other weapons they are reported to have repulsed several charges of Uhlans, and when all their ammunition was exhausted barricaded themselves in various houses and poured boiling water on the Germans in the streets, 2,000 of whom were disabled by wounds and scalds.

Russia has had quite a number of women in the fighting line. For the most part female recruits have been sternly discouraged, and have been sent back home when their sex has been discovered, but in a few instances women's services have received official recognition. A woman aviator, Princess Shakhouskaya, applied in vain at the beginning of the war for a commission in the air service, but the *Daily News* of December 1st reports that she has since received an invitation to join the air corps at its headquarters, and set out much delighted at this opportunity of serving her country. Another woman who has been allowed to serve in the Russian Army is Mlle. Tomilovsky, a girl of twenty-one, daughter of a colonel. Having cut her hair short and put on uniform, she accompanied her father to the war, taking part in several battles, including that of Augustino. On several occasions she served as orderly, scout, and telegraphist, and was finally appointed to the command of a platoon. She rendered important service in tapping a German staff telegram relating to a plan to break the Russian centre, thus enabling the Russians to make preparations which led to a serious repulse for the Germans. In this engagement Mlle. Tomilovsky was wounded and sent to a hospital in St. Petersburg. Her exploits resemble those of Félicité and Théophile de Fernig, two girls of sixteen and seventeen years of age, who were attached to the staff of General Dumouriez in his campaign in Belgium in 1792, taking part in several battles, and being mentioned in many dispatches.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTEER RESERVE.

In this country, while only a comparatively small proportion of the men are under arms, any movement to arm women for purposes of aggression would seem out of place. But the Women's Volunteer Reserve—which has been formed to train women for their own defence in the last extremity—is asking for Government recognition, and has received the support of the Lord Mayor of London and other

influential people. The idea is to train women in signalling, dispatch-carrying, telegraphy, camp-cooking, first aid, &c., so that they might offer their services to the State in case of need, and replace men who might be more usefully employed in the fighting line. Four companies of the Reserve are already at work in London, the headquarters being at 8, York-place, Baker-street.

At a meeting at the Mansion House last week, to explain the objects of the Corps, the Right Hon. H. Chaplin, M.P., declared that he was decidedly in favour of women taking up rifle-shooting. He was himself a good shot, and had often had women pupils whom he had always found to be better at trigger work than men, possibly because their hands were more delicate. One of his friends living at Wimbledon, where the old Bisley meeting used to take place, was acknowledged one of the record shots of the world, his only rivals being his son and his wife.

ENGLISH NURSES AT THE FRONT.

Nurses working under our own Army Medical Service are not supposed to go nearer to the firing line than the clearing stations, but many English nurses have served under fire in connection with the Belgian Medical Service, or with some privately organised hospital unit. *La Française* records the death at a hospital at Mans of a girl

of nineteen, Miss Bell, who had both her legs taken off by a shell while "picking up wounded at the front." The adventures of the staff of the Women's National Service League Hospital during the siege of Antwerp, and those of Miss Thurston and her fellow nurses at Brussels, have already been told in the pages of *THE COMMON CAUSE*.

ALLIES FIELD AMBULANCE CORPS.

Another Englishwoman who has been to the front is Miss Jessica Borthwick, who was for thirteen months in the Balkans, serving for six weeks at the cholera camp in Thrace. The following account of her work appeared in the *Daily News*:

"What is of the utmost importance is that the wounded receive treatment on the spot. That is what we, the Allied Field Ambulance Corps, are giving. We are attached to the Belgian Field Hospital at Furnes and have this as our centre, and we go to Ypres, Dixmude, Ghent, Ostend, wherever we are needed, with the ambulances and field kitchen. To be able to give the men hot coffee, hot meat extract, and this sort of thing at once is like giving them new life. The effect is instantaneous; after it they can stand the journey to the hospital very much better."

On one occasion Miss Borthwick was slightly wounded by a shell; on another a Taube dropped a bomb on a village where her ambulance was stationed. She relates that:—

"The same night after the shell burst at Oudecappelle we were at Dixmude. In some of the cellars that are not choked were German soldiers, who fired on us as we rushed through with stretchers, etc. From

the other side we got out to the trenches. It was a full moon, and the country is flat, with very few trees left standing, most having been cut down for fuel. So we had to lie flat and crawl along till we got to the trenches. The rifle firing was incessant, but we picked out men it was possible to move.

WOMEN'S FIRST AID NURSING YEOMANRY.

At the present time, English nurses sent out by the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry are working in connection with a hospital for Belgian soldiers at Calais. The party was organised by Miss Ashton Smith and Miss Franklin, and includes Mrs. Buller, an aviator, who has taken out a motor-bicycle and can drive an ambulance, Miss Mary White, and six other fully trained nurses, and several partly trained assistants.

These nurses, dressed in the workmanlike attire shown in the accompanying picture, actually go to the front with the ambulance waggons, to collect the wounded and render first aid. They went, among other places, to Dixmude and Ypres, while shelling was still going on, collecting the wounded, for the most part at night, and giving them what attention they could before taking them to the hospital at Calais. At one time the unit was short of anaesthetics, and serious operations had sometimes to be performed without, but Miss White relates that the Belgian soldiers showed wonderful pluck. She saw one man have his foot taken off without making a sound. Now, fortunately, anaesthetics have been procured, and when Miss White returned to England to be inoculated against typhoid, she was able to collect a large quantity of bed-clothes, bandages, and clothing for the men, to take back with her.

M. M.



Photo. by Louis Langlier.]

MISS WHITE,

One of the nurses sent out by the Women's First Aid Yeomanry.

BRITISH WOMEN SURGEONS IN FRANCE.

Mrs. St. Clair Stobart writes from her hospital, near Cherbourg:—

I think that you may perhaps like to hear news of the Women's Hospital Unit—of which I am directress—which is now established near Cherbourg in France. The Unit—practically the same which did such excellent work in Antwerp till the bombardment—comprises six women doctors and surgeons, with Dr. Florence Stoney as Head of the Medical Staff, 14 trained nurses, 12 orderlies to act as cooks, secretary, sanitary inspector, &c., to carry on the general work of the hospital. We have now been installed during five weeks in the old and particularly inconvenient Chateau de Tourlaville, three miles from Cherbourg. Through the agency of the Women's Imperial Service League and the generosity of friends, we brought out all our own equipment, beds, clothing, medical stores, &c., four motor ambulances, and three touring cars. With these we fetch our wounded from the quay at Cherbourg, where they arrive by steamer from Dunkirk, from the trenches around Ypres, Dixmude, &c.

And a more pitiable arrival it would be hard to picture. The huge green and white steamer, with its Red Cross funnel, glides slowly up to the quay, gangways are placed, and the so-called "petits blessés," with injuries in heads and arms and with frozen feet, &c., their haggard faces testifying to the horror of the scenes they have seen and suffered, hobble across as best they can. They have already been four or five days journeying since their wounds were received, and now they must be sent still further by train to various towns, Dinard, St. Malo, St. Brieux, &c., another long day's journey. Then comes the turn of the "gravement blessés"—those who cannot walk. A large hole opens in the ship's side and she disgorges shattered remnants of humanity, who, placed on stretchers, are carried to our waiting ambulances, which proceed with their sad cargoes in slow procession to Tourlaville, where at last they are at rest, and obtain that attention and loving care which only devoted women can give.

The Unit came out with the approval of the British Red Cross Society and under the authorization of the St. John's Ambulance Association, at the invitation of the French Croix Rouge, and we work immediately under the direction of the Maritime Chef de Santé for the district. At the moment of writing I have been interrupted in order to receive the director himself. He had a few days ago expressed a desire to gain the novel experience of seeing a woman surgeon operate, and he had asked us to give him an opportunity when an interesting case occurred. And just now, having witnessed the amputation of the sceptic leg of a man severely wounded, he has expressed his satisfaction by saying, "A man could not have done it better."

It is gratifying to see not only that the work done by this Women's Unit is advancing the cause of women amongst all the many officials, naval and military, medical and otherwise, who come to inspect and visit our work, but we know also that the demonstration which was given for the first time during the Balkan War by the Women's Convoy Corps, is, during this present war, being followed by further demonstrations which prove beyond possibility of dispute that women surgeons are capable of doing effective work in hospitals of war, also that soldiers do not resent being under the care of women surgeons, and that women are capable of administering hospitals of war in all the various departments without masculine assistance. What Florence Nightingale proved for women nurses has now been proved for women surgeons. Surely, henceforth, it will be impossible for British officialdom to deny to women privileges of national service which have already been gratefully acclaimed respectively by Bulgarian, Servian, Belgian, and French authorities?

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA.

Another sex barrier has been quietly removed in Australia. The State Parliament of Victoria has passed a Local Government Amending Act, one clause of which makes women eligible for municipal office in that State on the same terms as men. The clause met with no opposition in the Legislative Assembly (Lower House). Even in the Legislative Council (Upper House), a body elected on a property qualification, which in the past delayed Woman Suffrage and other feminist reforms, the clause was accepted without a division. One member of the Council, after stating that "every honorable member knew the absurdity of the proposal, and what a nuisance it would be at municipal elections," announced that he intended to vote for it. This is one more instance of the wholesome effect on legislation of women's votes. It also justifies the policy of Australian feminists who years ago resolved to concentrate all their energies on gaining the Parliamentary vote, believing that this was the quickest way to gain other reforms. English Suffragists will be interested to hear that Mr. Cotter, M.L.A., who proposed this clause, relied largely on arguments drawn from the splendid work that has been accomplished by Englishwomen in municipal life. He referred to the recent removal by the Imperial Parliament, in the midst of our struggle for national existence, of the disabilities which rendered many women ratepayers in Great Britain ineligible for municipal office. The example of the Motherland has a great effect throughout the Overseas Dominions. The attainment of Woman Suffrage in Great Britain will, undoubtedly do much to improve the status of women throughout the Empire.



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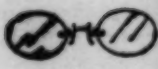
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The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies being a body which exists to obtain the enfranchisement of women, holds no official view upon any other topic. Opinions expressed upon other subjects must not be regarded as necessarily those of the Union.

Holland to Germany.

We publish to-day a letter sent by the women of Holland to the women of Germany, in response to an appeal from them to "let the voice of truth press through the chaos of passion and hate." This appeal has reference to the stories of atrocities perpetrated by German soldiery on the people of Belgium, and in accents of touching sincerity—for we are certain that these German women believe all that they say—it demands a judgment from neutral nations that it is the Germans who have suffered "unspeakable cruelties," while doing nothing in return, but "what every war with *franc-tireurs* renders necessary."

The answer of the women of Holland is given in full on another page. It should be remembered that the Dutch have no reason to lean to either side. While they have more reason to fear Germany—since Great Britain cannot be suspected of a wish to annex territory on the Continent—they have more reason to dislike our own country, for their feelings were inevitably on the side of the Boer Republics in our last war. Their nearness to Belgium, moreover, and the fact that the flood of Belgian refugees has poured into Dutch territory, gives to Dutch women a peculiarly close and terrible knowledge of the reality and meaning of war. Their reply is therefore of great interest.

It will be observed that it speaks of the horrors of war as inevitable to war. They may be greater or less, but horrible they remain, and must do, whether the rules of war are observed or not. The reply further points out that since "atrocities" are committed in times of peace, it is madness to suppose that they will be absent amid all the licence and confusion of war. But to us perhaps the most striking passage is that which urges upon the women of Germany the singularly one-sided character of their appeal. They charge it against "the small and unhappy people of Belgium" as a crime that they accuse their invaders of barbarity, yet they themselves—the German women—bring the same accusation of barbarous cruelty against both Belgians and Russians, and ask not only to be exculpated but believed. How is it possible for any of us to remain judges in our own case?

A great part remains to be played by the neutral nations. They can achieve impartiality where we cannot, and it is significant that the one word of pity which, in preserving a strictly impartial attitude towards the great nations involved yet escapes from the lips of these women, is for "the small unhappy people of Belgium." We believe it will be a deep realisation of what war has meant to this heroic and entirely innocent people which will, in time to come, create a determination that such horrors shall not be again. And we hope that women, to whom war comes with all its horror and little of its glory, will play a great part in crystallising that determination into fact. It is of good omen that the women of Germany should appeal to the women of neutral countries to "let the voice of truth press through the chaos of passion and hate," for it shows that the international character of the woman's movement, in spite of this awful disaster of war, has had its effect in creating a feeling of comradeship and trust among women. It is better still that the women of Holland should reply as they do, with such steadiness, such truth, such absence of bitterness, such realisation of their own responsibility, even in a neutral country, for the European cataclysm.

Disarmament?

Problems of War and Peace are discussed in THE COMMON CAUSE in a series of articles by well-known writers. Contributors are left free to express their own opinions, as we believe it to be in the public interest that such questions should be freely discussed. The articles are all signed and must not be assumed to represent the official views of the N.U.W.S.S.

After this war is ended, must the peoples of Europe return to the "armed peace" which preceded it? Must they devote a continually increasing share of their thought, interest, energy, and material resources to the crazy task of trying to make armies and navies each larger and stronger than those of other nations? And must they do this, no longer blinded by the delusion that such strong preparations for war are a security for peace, but knowing that they make certain at no distant time another war, even more destructive than the last? Such a thought is intolerable. Such an action would mean the practical abandonment of all that we have valued as civilisation. Everywhere thoughtful men and women are already raising voices of protest against another "armed peace," carrying with it almost inevitably "conscription," protective tariffs, autocratic rule, and a cancelment of all hopes of the social reforms which were beginning to enter the realm of practical politics. But how is this calamity to be averted? Not by destroying German militarism, as some fondly imagine. That the allies must conquer the present German forces as the first condition of any tolerable future state of Europe is indeed admitted. But that this victory, however complete, will secure Europe against a return to "the armed peace" is another proposition.

If the actual terms of settlement are such as to leave a permanently sullen and revengeful Germany, bent on recovering her military strength, and intriguing to sow dissension in a surrounding ring of hostile powers, there is no hope. Each nation must keep armed to the teeth and treat each other nation, even its present allies, as a potential enemy. No agreement to reduce armaments can possibly be effective unless the peace be such as to give rise to a Concert or Confederation of the Powers afterwards, in which Germany will consent to take a part. A settlement which merely shifted the area of *revanche* from France to Germany could do nothing to secure the peace of Europe. But suppose this first condition fulfilled, could the nations be got to agree to a common reduction of armaments? Not easily, not possibly, I think, unless further guarantees of peace by concerted action of the Powers were linked with the proposal of disarmament. As long as any considerable risk of an attack by another power or group of powers remains, as long as the opportunity to enforce aggressively some highly-prized claim upon another nation remains, so long will real disarmament, total or partial, by general consent, remain impracticable. For no accepted basis for reduction of armaments will be found.

Suppose a Council of the Powers seeking a common rule for the limitation of European armies in the future! Shall they start from the existing forces in the several countries and impose a proportionate reduction? That would be absurd, for it would leave the nations in the same relative position as before, and with the same grounds for belief in their power to gain their ends by force as before. But, if size of population, extent of territory or of frontiers—most relevant conditions in such an issue—were taken as bases for reduction of armed force, would an agreement be more feasible? On the application of any of these tests, Germany would be allowed to keep a much stronger army than France, and Russia than the two put together. Similar difficulties would apply to navies, if size of country or population were made the basis. If, as we should doubtless urge, quantity of shipping and of commerce were taken as valid or determinant factors, the relative strength of the British Navy would be greater than before, a result which would hardly be acceptable to all the other Powers. Moreover, there are a number of other difficulties hardly less formidable. Is this country at liberty to count in her vast Empire, Russia her Asiatic provinces, in the population or territorial basis? Again, what constitutes a soldier? Do armed police, shooting clubs, gymnasium societies, and the various other known subterfuges for soldiery count in, and what practicable measures can be found for checking them? What steps can be taken to counteract the great advantage to a navy of a great mercantile marine which, in time of need, may be made available for transport or for arming? These are the most obvious of difficulties for which no solution has been found in discussion of disarmament.

I cite them here, not to evoke feelings of despair, but to insist upon my main thesis that a reduction of armaments will remain impracticable so long as the existing motives to arm are not removed. It is only by inducing nations no longer to regard

force as a natural or possible way of attaining disputed ends that they can be got to accept any basis for reduction of armaments, or to adhere to it. In other words, a genuinely effective substitute for settlement of quarrels by ordeal of battle must be found. Arbitration and conciliation are, of course, the general expressions for this alternative. I think it may be taken for granted that some serious endeavour will be made by the representatives of the more civilised Powers at the Peace Congress which concludes this war to get nations to make a substantial advance towards acceptance of arbitral settlement. America has already proposed a series of treaties which would bind States adopting them to submit all arbitrable issues, including honour, vital interests, and other matters hitherto exempted, to arbitration. If a general treaty could be secured by which all, or most, of the chief powers would bind themselves to enter such arbitration at The Hague, and to accept the awards of the Court, one considerable step, not merely towards substituting justice for war, but towards reduction of armaments, would have been taken.

But there are other issues of a most dangerous kind, in their nature not suitable for a court of arbitration, remaining to be dealt with. If the Powers could establish by agreement a permanent council to inquire into such matters of international disturbance, and to make reports with proposals for pacific settlement, we should then have in existence the nucleus of an international government. But there remains the vital question, Would all Governments which had entered into these arrangements abide by them in the stress of some great temptation? Might not some less scrupulous Power or group break away, and, refusing to carry out an award or a judgment of the international court or council, resort to armed force to get its way? Some would reply, with Mr. Taft, that they believed the moral force of public opinion, the conscience of the nations, would be a sufficient restraining influence. I do not. I hold it unlikely that a society of nations could come into existence with a common will and consciousness so highly developed as entirely to dispense with a physical force basis of government.

I therefore hold that the nations entering into agreements to arbitrate all arbitrable issues and to submit all others to a Representative Council of the Powers must be prepared to bind themselves to support by their united force the awards and judgments of their court or council against lawless infractions of the public peace. However difficult it may be to obtain the consent of the Powers to the creation of what is in effect an international executive with force behind it, nothing short of this, in my opinion, will suffice to win the necessary measure of security for the effectiveness of Court and Council. Only when all nations are bound to recognise that any separate armaments they possess will not be strong enough to enable them successfully to break away from and defy the international government will the present motives to pile up armaments "in case of eventualities" be seriously damaged. If a would-be lawbreaker once recognises that he will not be strong enough to defy the law, he will no longer consume his substance in preparing to break the law.

J. A. HOBSON.

[Next week: "In Case of Invasion," followed by "Conscription."]

"WINTER AND THE WAR."

"Winter and the War" was the subject of the London Society's meeting on December 16th, at Queen's Hall, at which Lady Frances Balfour presided. There was a long war, and possibly a long winter before us, Sir George Pragnell said, and pointed out that, to the business mind, the worst part of all the good work that was being done was the overlapping of not only institutions and collections, but enthusiasm and method. If they had had proper business management from the first, no working women need have been out of employment, since we have now a large Army and Navy as well as our sick and wounded to clothe and feed. It was necessary, though, to watch closely how and where the things were being made if you were going to get the women properly paid for the work.

Suffragists, Professor Gilbert Murray said, had turned now from demanding a right to offering a service, although he knew that what they had always wanted had been the right to serve. He was hoping, he said, that when we looked back on the war, there would be a link between all of us which would not break—some little shadows everywhere of the feeling that might exist between two peoples who had looked together into the face of death because they felt each one of them could trust the other.

Mrs. Fawcett said that the agonies and anguish of the war would not have been in vain if they resulted in a world organisation to prevent any nation or group of nations from breaking the peace.

OUR HOSPITAL IN FRANCE.

(FROM MISS CICELY HAMILTON.)

I have been asked to write for *THE COMMON CAUSE* what may be termed the first chapter of the *Chronicles of the Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service*. By the way, it is really the second chapter, but the lengthy prologue dealing with the collection and launching of the unit must be written, if it ever is written, by Dr. Elsie Inglis or one of her strenuous committee. The chronicle, so far as I am concerned with it, begins on November 30th, 1914, with the early morning departure from Victoria of the advance guard of the unit. Eight in number we lurched across the Channel; landed at Boulogne with a boat-load of returning soldiers; crawled to Paris by a devious byway of railroad, and found ourselves, two days later, in what must surely be as beautiful a hospital building as any in the breadth of France—the Abbaye de Royaumont. Founded, so they tell us, by St. Louis, a monastery in the Middle Ages, a convent later—and now, thanks to the generosity of its owner and the work of the Scottish Women's Hospital, a place of refuge for the wounded.

Those first few days at Royaumont I shall always look back on as an experience worth the having. In surroundings of mediæval grandeur—amid vaulted corridors, Gothic refectories and cloisters—we proceeded to camp out with what we carried. The Abbey, in all its magnificence was ours; but during those first few days it did not offer us very much beyond magnificence and shelter. It had not been lived in for years, and its water supply had been practically cut off when the nuns left it for Belgium. Hence we carried water in buckets up imposing staircases and along equally imposing corridors. Our only available stove—a mighty erection in the kitchen that had not been lit for a decade—was naturally short-tempered at first, and the supply of hot water was limited. So, in consequence, was our first washing; at times very limited indeed. Our equipment, after the fashion of baggage in these times of war, was in no great hurry to arrive; until it arrived we did without sheets and blankets, wrapped ourselves in rugs and overcoats at night, and did not do much undressing. We borrowed tea-cups from the village ironmonger, and passed the one knife round at meals for everyone to take a chop with it. We were as short of lamps as we were of knives—shorter; and we wandered about our majestic pile with candle-ends, stuck in bottles; little

twinkling candle-ends, that struggled with the shadows under the groined roofs. . . . We are getting electric light in now, and already I find it in my heart to regret those bottled candles with their Rembrandtesque effects. Two of them, faintly dispersing the gloom at one end of the vaulted kitchen—while the pillars climbed to lose themselves in the blackness.

. . . I try to console myself for their loss by reflecting that the staring electric bulbs are more practical for hospital purposes. But I am glad I saw the kitchen before the bulbs were in.

We did not easily get our staring electric bulbs; nor did we easily get our water turned on, our drains attended to, or our broken windows mended. We live, you see, in the land of compulsory military service—where the plumber, the glazier, the electrician can only attend to your wants when he has not been ordered to the colours. Most of our local plumbers, glaziers, and electricians are men of military age, and have been ordered to the colours; so our preparations have been slow—but if they have been slow they have been sure. Drains, water, heating, lighting—everything, in spite of difficulties, is finally getting itself done. A few days ago our equipment condescended to arrive—and now we have knives all round, and blankets and towels. More important still, there are rows of beds in the wards, and we are awaiting the formal visit of inspection of the French military authority.

One thing I should like to impress upon those who have contributed, or mean to contribute, to the work—and that is the pleasure of the folk round here when they learn that our hospital is intended primarily for the service of their own people. They "take it kindly" that we come to help their men; they "take it kindly" that we concern ourselves with the sufferings of their boys, their husbands, and their brothers. We have been thanked very gratefully and courteously already for what we are trying to do for "nos petits soldats." . . . It may be that, in its own small way and in its own small corner of the world, the Scottish Women's Hospital is drawing the bonds of the Allies tighter; if that is so, its existence, from a political as well as a humanitarian point of view, is not without its value.

CICELY HAMILTON.

Abbaye de Royaumont, December 17th.

SOME CHRISTMAS PLAYS.

"THE COCKYOLLY BIRD" AT THE LITTLE THEATRE.

An amusing chapter will be written some day about the history of children's plays. "Peter Pan," for instance, has produced a statue in Kensington Gardens. Mrs. Dearmer's play, "The Cockyolly Bird," is responsible this year for two new toys. One is, of course, the Cockyolly Bird itself, as Messrs. Hamley conceive it; the other, the "Goslimb" (a portmanteau word for a gosling who is "what nurses call a limb"), derives from the poster by which Mrs. Dearmer summons children and all who like a real children's play, to the matinées of "The Cockyolly Bird," at the Little Theatre. This again comes from the picture-book which the children's dramatist drew when she was better known as an illustrator than as a writer, for Laurence Housman's delightful book of "The Seven Little Goslings." But a whole treatise could be written about cockyolly birds; for the original cockyolly of the "Noah's Ark Geography," which the play, so to say, dramatises, was a wooden toy, no longer to be got at Hamley's or anywhere else—a bird as obsolete as the dodo. Also it was a bird which did not admit of reproduction by any human actor, and accordingly "The Cockyolly Bird," Mrs. Dearmer's revised edition of that old book, which Hodder and Stoughton publish this year, shows a cockyolly much more like what that clever little person, Dorothy Manville, made of it last year, and will make of it again this season.



A SHAKESPEARE SEASON.

Boys and girls home for the holidays will have several opportunities of seeing Shakespeare's plays this Christmas. Mr. F. R.

Benson will produce "Henry V." at the Shaftesbury Theatre on December 26th, seats being at popular prices ranging from 1s. to 6s.; and at the Coronet a Shakespeare season, beginning with "The Midsummer Night's Dream," will open after Christmas. There will be a strong caste, including several former members of Mr. Benson's Company.

A CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY.

A Nativity play called "The Shepherds" is to be produced at the Westminster Cathedral Hall, on January 5th, 7th, and 8th, at 3.30, by Miss Edith Craig, in aid of the Franciscan Hop Fields Mission. The author of the play is Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C., a Capuchin Friar, who is Warden of the Hostel for Franciscan students at Oxford University, and is well-known in literary circles through his admirable life of St. Francis of Assisi. This is Father Cuthbert's first play, and, so far as we know, the first play by a Franciscan to be put on the stage since the Middle Ages.

"The Shepherds" is reported to be written in a racy, colloquial style, precisely that style which the secular dramatist, who associates religion only with Church on Sundays, seldom succeeds in achieving. Miss Edith Craig has got together a strong cast, which includes Mr. Patrick Kirwan and Miss Ellen O'Malley. The performances are under the patronage of Cardinal Bourne and other distinguished persons, and tickets may be obtained from Ashton's and Mitchell's Agency, New Bond-street, and from the Art Book Co., Ashley-place, Westminster.

THE VOICE OF TRUTH.

Answer of Frau H. van Biema-Hijmans (President of the National Council of Women in the Netherlands) to a letter from the Women of Germany:—

I should like to say to the women of Germany what I shall now try to write to you after reading the protest and prayer, which may be summed up in the words, "Let the voice of truth press through the passion of chaos and of hate."

I should be heartily glad to help to achieve this, and in this moment when it does not seem to me quite impossible, I turn to you.

We who stand on one side without partisanship, and have no occasion to hate any one of the nations engaged in the war, know more of the truth, and are able already to have a more unprejudiced judgment than those who are in the toils of the conflict.

The one thing which we already know beyond doubt, and which I will say out here is the truth, that in this war courage ready for death and a barbaric lust of destruction go hand in hand, and that this truth is as clear in the case of the German army as in the case of the other armies. And could it be otherwise?

You women of Germany can perhaps not yet grasp this, but nevertheless you, as well as we, have long ago confessed that our civilisation is still very imperfect, and you have worked for Women's Suffrage in order to be able to co-operate better in the struggle for civilisation. Like the rest of us you knew that in Germany, as in other lands, girls are sold, women are shamed, and that in most cases the police can do nothing against it because the wrong-doers remain undiscoverable. If you only think this out a little further you will be obliged to confess that among the soldiers there are quite other elements than the husbands and sons of women of good education and refined feeling. The procurers of Berlin, for example, are there as well, and innumerable criminals of different kinds who have committed outrage without their offence being discovered. And do you suppose that such men who, in times of peace, have already done wrong to the community, will give up their evil ways in war when it is so much easier to escape detection?

You speak of the unspeakable cruelties of the misguided people of Belgium, and of the barbaric foes who have laid waste East Prussia, and you impute it as a sin to the small, unhappy Belgian people that they speak of their barbaric enemies who have laid waste their land, and brought unspeakable misery on the population. Believe me, dear madam, when I assure you that not everything is true which stands written in the pamphlet which has been sent from Berlin to us women in neutral countries, and that much has happened in Belgium of which the pamphlet says nothing. That, too, is quite natural when the facts are presented only from one side.

You German women beg us not to believe that your husbands and sons are guilty of cruelties; but you wish that we should believe it of the husbands and sons of another nationality. And yet ties of personal friendship unite the women of Germany with the women of other lands which stand on the same level of culture. Is it conceivable that the education of men has failed everywhere, and only succeeded in Germany?

Ought not one much rather to assert that the bad elements which are everywhere included in the army through the military duty will also render themselves guilty of the same outrages everywhere unless the better elements are in a position to hinder them?

We all love our Fatherland, you German people not less, and also not better than we others. I can assure you that Russia and England and France and Belgium are quite convinced that they are fighting for their country, for freedom, for independence, and righteousness. Are we then obliged to assume that this conviction is justified in the case of one people, and false in the case of other peoples? We Dutch women are thankful that up till now our men have not had to stand the test, and we hope this will continue to be the case till this war is at an end. But we feel even now that we long with all civilised peoples to share the responsibility for the fact that this war could break out even in our time, and that our civilisation which we men and women have shared together has proved to be veneer.

We must not then ask who is right; we must not lay the blame of cruelty on any one, for every war is the most cruel and most horrible thing imaginable, and against its cruelty there is no defence.

Our thought world has been shaken, and we gaze comfortless on life and its misery. We feel more strongly than ever that only through each individual adopting the conviction that one can best serve one's Fatherland by fighting the war spirit, only through our learning to regard peace as the highest good, can true civilisation find its development in the future.

SCHOOL GIRL'S COOLNESS UNDER FIRE.

One of the mistresses of a school at Scarborough gives the following account of the plucky way in which her pupils behaved under shell fire:—

Early in the morning some of the girls in the upper room thought they saw a vivid light flashing through the sky. They got up and all left their bedrooms and assembled in a room downstairs. Twenty minutes after they had left their rooms a shell burst through the house, smashed right through the outer wall, went completely through the front room into a class room, through the blackboard, and finally landed and exploded in a bedroom, which was fortunately empty. The noise was deafening, the shells came hurling and splitting through the air, breaking every window and making everything in the house vibrate. The roar was far worse than a thunderstorm. Two shells must have burst on the house, for afterwards, besides the break in the wall, it was found that the steps had gone too. The girls acted with extraordinary coolness. They were simply marvellous. I don't know what possessed them. They did not

seem to have an atom of fear, and did not even look frightened. They comforted the small ones and some little Belgian girls who knew what a bombardment meant, and whose faces were terrible to see. Instead of being frightened, our girls all went down in splendid order to the cellars—and sang an impromptu form of their own of "Tipperary." I suppose they were prepared because we had talked over what we should do if the Germans came. We had even had the telegrams all written out beforehand for the children's parents, and I had to send them off when the shelling was finished and relieve their minds. Our school was in the direct line of the wireless station, that is why we got the shells, I suppose, and many people must have been killed further along the road, for their houses were in ruins.

SOLDIERS' LETTERS TO THE NATIONAL UNION.

At the N.U. Shop at 50, Parliament Street, a letter has been received from a sergeant at the front, signed, "One in the firing line." Enclosed was a 5-franc note, with a request to send one of the N.U. British Khaki "Tommy" dolls to his little girl. He had seen the notice of the toys in *The Daily News*, and this was the only way in which he was enabled to send his little girl a present this year. The 5-franc note was changed for 3s. 11d., and so a shilling doll's hat-box was sent as well, and a Christmas card with it.

The postman who delivers the letters to the National Union offices is now at the front, and has also sent a 5-franc note in a letter, in which he tells the ages and sexes of his children, and asks that a parcel of N.U. toys may be sent to them.

A CORRECTION.

MADAM,—In the report given by Leeds lately, of the relief work, &c., done by our Suffrage Society, we omitted the name of Miss Findlay, whose co-operation as joint secretary with Mrs. Renton of the Lady Mayoress's Committee is absolutely invaluable. We have, however, only referred to our own Society's officers' work, for if we mentioned the names of others, not in our Society, or all the names of our own members even, the list would be immense!—Yours,

I. O. FORD.

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What Our Societies Are Doing.

West Midland Federation.

Another Society in the West Midland Federation has responded to the appeal made in THE COMMON CAUSE two or three weeks ago for the support of individual beds in the Scottish Women's Hospital. The Malvern Society has sent a donation of £25 to endow a "Malvern Suffrage Bed" for six months, and hopes to raise a further sum to complete the year. This Society has also started a working party for the Hospital. It is hoped that many others in the Union will follow Malvern's example. A constant supply of linen, bandages, etc., will be needed when the units are in full work, and it would immensely relieve the Committee at headquarters of any anxiety on that score if some Societies made themselves responsible for adequate supplies. The weekly meetings would also keep up enthusiasm and interest in our N.U.W.S.S. Hospital, and thus help to bring in more donations of money, which are so essential to the expansion of the work.

Bradford.

On December 10th a small Christmas Fair was held by the Bradford Society at the new Suffrage Office, 136A Manningham Lane, in order to raise funds for the various relief work in which it is interested, including the Suffrage Hospitals and the Maternity Care Work. The sale was opened by the Lady Mayoress (Mrs. G. H. Robinson), supported by Mrs. Moser and Miss Wade. There was a large attendance, and the sum of £24 was taken. The Committee wish to thank all those members who, at such short notice, helped with contributions, etc., and made the sale the success it was.

Braintree.

All available halls in the twin towns of Braintree and Bocking being occupied by the military, the annual meeting of the Braintree and District Branch was held in the quaint old-world residence, Bradford House, Bocking, by kind permission of Miss Smoothery on the afternoon of Friday, 11th inst. The chair was taken at 2.30 by Miss E. Vaughan. Miss M. R. Courtauld (Hon. Secretary) presented the report, which showed that eleven meetings of various descriptions had been held during the official year, active efforts made to assist the Belgian Refugees, and that the financial position of the branch is highly satisfactory. The meeting terminated with an interesting conversation on matters germane to work under military conditions, and it was decided to purchase literature of a helpful character for the soldiers' reading rooms.

Rugby.

A well-attended general meeting of the members of the Rugby W.S.S. was held on December 15th at The Limes—when Mrs. Roberts, our valued Press Secretary, Hon. Press Secretary, and Treasurer of the S. Midland Federation, gave us a most interesting and concise account of the Wallasey Provincial Council Meeting. The meeting was a thoroughly representative one, and Mrs. Roberts's address was followed by discussion.

The Hon. Secretary appealed for funds towards the Central Counties Bed in the Scottish Hospital, and £5 was sent to that fund. £2 2s. had also been forwarded, the proceeds of the work of some of the members, to the Queen's "Work for Women" Fund.

The Hon. Secretary gave a short account of the School for Mothers recently opened at New Bilton, which had been inspected by a Government doctor, and promised a grant from the Local Government Board.

Reading.

"Women and the War" was the title of an address given by Miss Anna Munro at a meeting

held in the Palmer Hall, Reading, on Monday, December 7th. Mrs. Sacret very ably presided over a good attendance. Miss Anna Munro, who was warmly received, referred in the course of her address to the insults which had lately been offered to our soldiers' wives.

South Midland Federation.

Members' meetings of the following societies have been visited by Mrs. Roberts, who represented the Federation at the Provincial Council—Kettering, Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, and Northampton. A report of the Council was given, and discussion followed on the position of the N.U. with regard to war. At Kettering it is hoped to form a Study Circle to consider some of the problems of war. It is hoped that a meeting on similar lines will soon be held at Crick.

Forthcoming Meetings.

DECEMBER 30.

Lambeth—Moffat Institute, Esher Street, Upper Kennington Lane—Speaker, Miss Ruth Young 8.30

CHRISTIANITY AND THE WAR.

A Conference for Teachers will be held at the Caxton Hall, Victoria Street, London, S.W., on January 8th & 9th, 1915.

PROGRAMME.

FRIDAY, January 8th, 7.30 p.m.—Devotional Meeting, conducted by The Rev. W. TEMPLE.
SATURDAY, January 9th, 10—12.30—"The Problem," Miss MAUDE ROYDEN.

SATURDAY, January 9th, 1.30—4—Work in Schools.
(a) "The Incultation of a Christian Temper at this time."—Miss A. de SELINCOURT.
(b) "Educational Methods and the Training of Character."—The Rev. W. TEMPLE.

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Printed by the National Press Agency Ltd., Whitefriars House, Carmelite St., London, for the Proprietors, THE COMMON CAUSE PUBLISHING CO. LTD., and Published at 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C. London: George Vickers. Manchester: John Heywood; Abel Heywood & Son; W. H. Smith & Son. Newcastle-on-Tyne: W. H. Smith & Son. Edinburgh and Glasgow: J. Menzies & Co. Dublin and Belfast: Eason & Son.